

CLAIMS

1. A part for use in a moulding apparatus, the part comprising a shaped member consisting of stabilised zirconia.

5 2. A part according to claim 1 which is a punch.

3. A part according to claim 2, in which the shaped member constitutes the whole punch.

10 4. A part according to claim 2, in which the shaped member constitutes a portion of the punch, the punch comprising at least one further portion.

5. A part according to claim 4, in which said at least one further portion is of zirconia or of any other suitable material.

15 6. A part according to claim 5, in which at least that portion of the surface of the punch that in use contacts the material to be moulded will be constituted by the shaped member consisting of stabilised zirconia.

20 7. A part according to any one of claims 2 to 6, in which the shaped member consisting of stabilised zirconia includes a surface having at least one protrusion arranged to form, in use, a corresponding recess or recesses in an article moulded using the part.

25 8. A part according to any one of claims 2 to 7, in which the shaped member consisting of stabilised zirconia includes a surface having at least one recessed region arranged to form, in use, a corresponding embossed region or regions on an article moulded using the part.

30 9. A part according to claim 7 or claim 8, in which said at least one protrusion or at least one recessed region is in the form of one or more letters of the alphabet.

10. A part according to any one of claims 2 to 9, in which the shaped member comprising zirconia is configured

Suba¹ and dimensioned to impart to an article to be moulded a feature or features of configuration that is or are substantially invisible to the naked eye.

11. A part according to any one of claims 2 to 10, in which the shaped member consisting of stabilised zirconia is configured to impart to an article to be moulded a feature of configuration which is suitable for distinguishing the article from a counterfeited article.

12. A part according to claim 1 which is a die.

13. A part according to claim 12, in which the shaped member constitutes the whole die.

14. A part according to claim 13, in which the shaped member constitutes a portion of the die, the die comprising at least one further portion.

15. A part according to claim 14, in which said at least one further portion may be of zirconia or of any other suitable material.

Suba² 16. A part according to claim 14 or claim 15, in which the shaped member is a liner for the interior of the die.

Sub B¹ 17. A part for use in a moulding apparatus, the part comprising a shaped member consisting of alumina and from 5 to 20% by weight stabilised zirconia.

18. A punch or die comprising zirconia substantially as described herein, said punch or die being suitable for use in a moulding apparatus.

Suba³ 19. A moulding apparatus comprising at least one part according to any one of claims 1 to 18.

Sub B¹ 20. A moulding apparatus according to claim 19, which is suitable for use in the manufacture of powder plugs for encapsulation in gelatin capsules.

21. A moulding apparatus according to claim 20, in which the shaped member is a cylindrical tube.

22. A tableting machine which comprises at least one punch comprising a shaped member consisting essentially of zirconia and/or at least one die comprising a shaped member consisting essentially of zirconia.

5 23. A tableting machine according to claim 22, which comprises at least one pair of punches and a die which are each so configured that they cooperate to form, in use, a moulded article having a plurality of edges and corners.

10 24. A member consisting of stabilised zirconia, the member being suitable for use in an apparatus for the manufacture of tablets.

25. A method of making a moulded article, which is administrable to a human or animal, comprising introducing
15 a zirconium-containing compound into a mould with the material to be moulded, the zirconium-containing compound being present in an amount of 0.05 to 20% by weight.

26. A method according to claim 25, in which the zirconia is introduced into the mould in admixture with the
20 material to be moulded.

27. A method according to claim 25, in which the zirconia is introduced into the mould in advance of the material to be moulded.

Suba 4 28. A method according to any one of claims 25 to 27,
25 in which the moulded article is a tablet.

Sub B 29. A method according to claim 28, in which the moulded article is a pharmaceutical tablet.

30. A method of making a moulded article substantially as described herein.

Suba 5 31. A moulded product manufactured according to the
30 method of any one of claims 25 to 30.

33. The use of zirconia in a part for a moulding apparatus, for imparting improved lubricity to said part.

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